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Notes on Fresh-water Jellyfish, and New Records for Illinois

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In the past few years more and more scattered North American records of the fresh-water jellyfish, *Craspedacusta sowerbii* Lankester, have appeared in the literature. At the present time the species is known from twenty-five states, the District of Columbia and the Canal Zone. The following states have published records for its occurrence: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia. This list has been compiled from the works of Bennett, Byers, Dejdar, Pennak, Schmitt, and Zeliff.

There has been considerable confusion as to the proper name for the North American fresh-water jellyfish. Many authors place it as *Craspedacusta sowerbii* Lankester, 1880, which was described from a medusa collected in Europe, while others refer it to *Craspedacusta*

Microhydra Potts) ryderi (Potts), 1885, which was described from a North American hydroid specimen. Payne (1926) and Schmitt both state that they believe *C. ryderi* to be a synonym of *C. sowerbii*, and Pennak follows this convention.

To date, there are four published records of medusae only for the State of Illinois. Van Cleave notes the following localities: Vandalia, Fayette County (by D. J. O'Donnell, 1931 and September 5 to September 20, 1932), and Carmi, White County (by J. Cralley, August 8 to September 20, 1933). Both of these collections were from small, concrete, fish and water-lily ponds which were three feet deep and fed by city water supplies. The first occurrence was based upon the observations of Mr. O'Donnell while the second was based on preserved specimens. Schmitt lists another visual record from Vandalia: G. L. Hackleman sent to him a sketch of a jellyfish observed on September 20, 1932, in a rock pool on the grounds of the Old Capitol Nursery Company at

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Vandalia. Steagall records a medusa taken in the State water tank at Anna, Union County, Illinois, by Cornelius West.

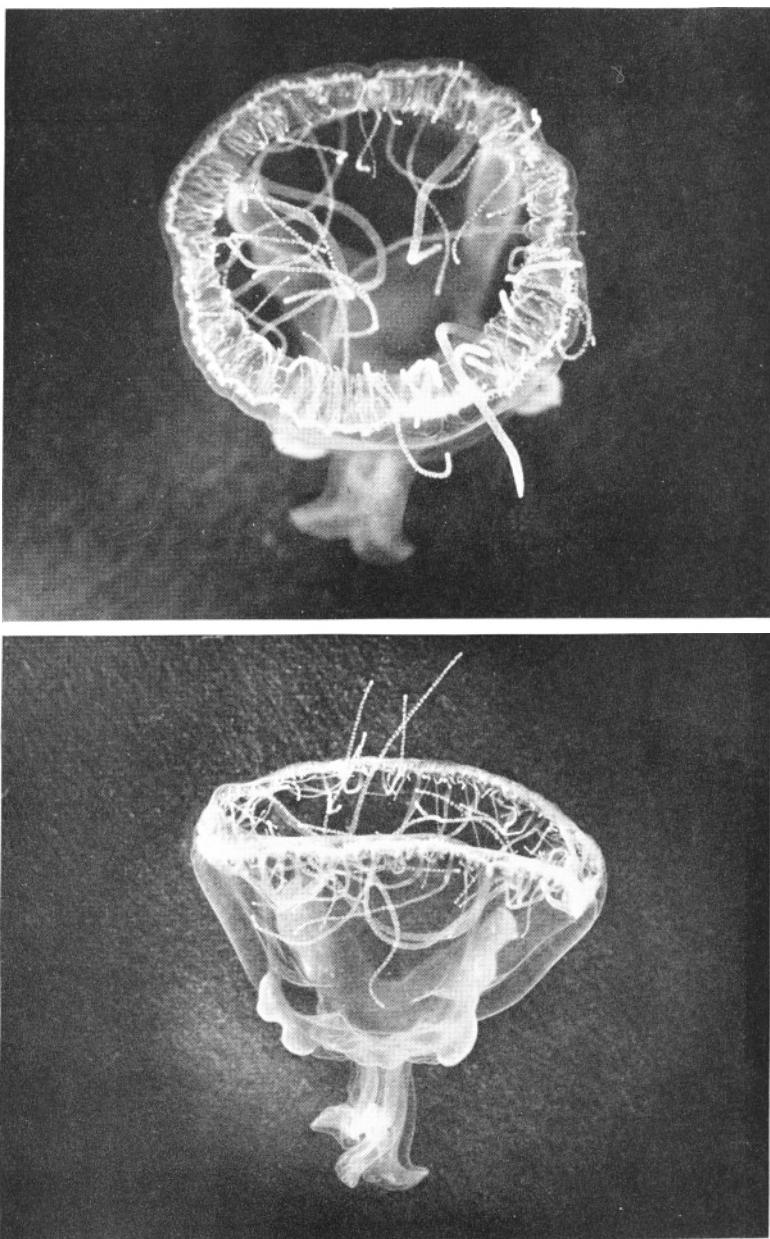
The new records are the first for central Illinois, all of the others having been in the southern part of the state. On September 1, 1952, a school of about 20 medusae was sighted at the water's surface by Dr. G. E. Moore and Dr. R. K. Hersh while fishing in Sunset Pond in the Polliwog area one and one-half miles southeast of Oakwood, Vermilion County, Illinois. This pond is a semi-natural one which was formed by strip-mining in the early twentieth century and is frequently flooded by the Salt Fork River. The day was sunny, warm and calm. Of the jellyfish sighted, only five were finally collected, three of which were sent to Dr. H. J. Van Cleave at the University of Illinois while the other two were deposited with the Illinois Natural History Survey.

Henry Jewel, swimming in the central lake of the Fairmount Quarry, Fairmount, Vermilion County, Illinois, sighted a large number of medusae near the water's surface on September 5, 1953. He followed the movement of the school for several weeks and found that they migrated in an area about five-hundred feet long and twenty-five to a hundred feet wide, exhibiting a tendency to maintain an up-wind position. Dr. R. W. Larrimore and W. F. Childers of the Illinois Natural History Survey learned of these animals and obtained thirteen specimens from Mr. Jewel which they presented to the invertebrate collection of the Natural History Survey. A living jellyfish from this series was photographed for the accompanying illustrations.

The following selected references contain ail of the articles on Illinois *Craspedacusta* and other important references on the biology and distribution of North American fresh-water jellyfish.

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Medusa of *Craspedacusta sowerbii*, bell inverted. Supraumbrellar aspect above, lateral aspect below. Photographs by W. E. Clark.

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